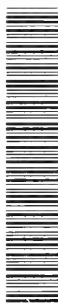


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The Wanderer  
& Other Poems

*By the Same Writer.*

The Great Companions. 1908.

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*In Preparation.*

The Adventure : a Play.

The Wanderer  
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Henry Bryan Binns

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NOTE.—*The Wanderer* was first printed in *The Albany Review*; a few of the poems made a first appearance in *The Academy*, *The New Age*, and other periodicals, and I thank the editors for allowing me to republish them. I have reprinted three from an earlier volume (now out of print) which was accredited to "Richard Askham." Mr. Rutland Boughton has written choral music for *The Building of the City*.

## Is it Knowledge that Wakens Song ?

*IS it knowledge that wakens Song,  
Or wisdom bred of the Past?—  
Though her eyes are eagle-strong,  
And her flying eagle-vast,  
Is it knowledge that wakens Song,  
Or wisdom out of the Past?*

*Nay, but Thou that hast wings,  
Thou that hast eyes for far,  
Spirit of Living Things  
Who singest and lo, they are—  
Nay, it is Thou hast wings,  
Thou that hast eyes for far !*

## Wind and Rain

*Written during a storm in the Jura*

WHO would not ride on the Shadowy Plain  
Horsed with the Host of the galloping Rain?  
Ride, ride  
Over the wide  
Leagues of the forest, the corn-land, the meadows,  
Blotting together the lights and the shadows?  
With the wind, the wind in his heart, in his brain,  
Who would not ride?

Into the dark that is black, that is blind,  
Sped by the tempest that thunders behind—  
(Hark, hark!  
Loud through the dark  
Roaring, he urges us into the denser  
Thick of the pines where the night is intenser!)  
With the Rain, the Rain on the galloping Wind  
Who would not ride?

An Apollo at the Vatican

I SAW the eagle joy of things  
A captive, drooping down his wings,  
While his dawn-enkindled eyes  
Sickened for forgotten skies.

I felt the godlike heart of man—  
Ceasing from its stellar span—  
Draw instead a broken breath  
And resign itself to death.

Strode of a sudden, summer-bright  
As a towering cloud of light,  
Through that drear imprisonment,  
Apollo, playing as he went.

He is Manhood, setting forth  
With his face toward the north,  
With his radiant head on high,  
And his feet upon the sky,

Mirth of morning for his mien;  
While the exultant strings, between  
His divine young fingers, play  
*The beginning of the Day.*

## The Building of the City

**I** SEE a City being wrought  
Upon the rock of Living Thought.  
It was a bloodless dream until  
It quickened in a good man's will,  
Became a hope, became a vow,  
For one, for many, until now  
Upon the rock of Living Thought  
I see the City being wrought.  
City of Thought, City of Dream,  
Standing beside the ancient stream  
Of Progress, all thy fields are free  
To the wide winds of Liberty !  
Builded thou art, but yet forever  
We build thee with our heart's endeavour  
Upon the border of that Stream  
Beautiful City of our Dream !  
Colour and music, fancy, song,  
To our enduring toil belong :  
Naught shall be wanting that can free  
Our spirit : there shall ever be  
Goblets of laughter at the lip  
Of this exultant fellowship,  
Because our hands together frame  
A City unbedimmed by shame.  
Foursquare our City, taking all  
The winds with heart heroical :  
Ay, blow or buffet, groan or gride,  
She takes them, for she is the bride  
Of a free people who have sold  
No liberty of hers for gold,  
Nor for poor prudence did transgress  
The pure love of her loveliness.

# The Building of the City

I I

She is our faith ! How like a star  
Mocking the dark she shines afar !  
Our light, she writes upon the wall  
Of darkness challenges to all  
The drear and dread and doleful powers,  
That they release the golden hours  
They squander, and give back again  
The glory of the day to men.

To every citadel of wrong  
Her stones cry out a battle-song :  
She is so wrought of manly stuff  
The nations have not power enough  
To silence her : her heart is free  
From any fear of any : She  
Can take the world's assaulting shock  
Builted so on the Living Rock.

I see the City being wrought  
Upon the rock of Living Thought :  
Upon her rising walls I look,  
And every stone is like a book  
Of many milk-white pages, fair  
Imprinted, with a loving care ;  
While on each lovely page is set  
Word of a wisdom lovelier yet.

City of Thought, City of Dream,  
Standing beside the cosmic stream  
Of Progress, all thy fields are free  
To the wide winds of Liberty !  
Builted thou art, but yet forever  
We build thee with our heart's endeavour,  
Upon the borders of that Stream,  
Beautiful City of our Dream !

The Spanish Gipsy : Suggested by Ignacio  
Zuloaga's *Lucienne Breal*.

AS the night fell, I found her on the hills.  
Great-shouldered she—with one hand on her hip,  
Her chin upon the other hand—her gaze  
Sibylline. When I came into her gaze  
Still had it been as though I stood afar,  
So far she shot her sight ; but that its shaft—  
How far soe'er across the hills it flew—  
Was fire-tipped, to burn inward, suddenly.

A gold snake circled round her swart forearm :  
Upon her fingers gleamed the night-dark stone :  
Deep down upon her brow the forest-dark  
Of her tumultuous hair hung heavily ;  
And thereunder, but darklier, for there pulsed  
Her living blood within it, shone her gaze.  
Her heart stood watching at its open port :  
The night fell on the hills : she drew the night  
In and about her : she was one with it.  
Mystical was her mouth, as Freedom's mouth  
Whose lips awake the morning from his sleep  
With clarion call : her dread and silent face  
More silent than the hills, because it was  
Yet mightier than they, yet mightier  
Than the last mountain, merging in the night.



## The Spanish Gipsy

13

Bred of the mountain night and dread with power,  
Prophetic, masterful, indifferent,  
The daughter of the Night, and doorkeeper  
Of that yet unimaginable Day  
That every night, descending on the land,  
Presages, and that every evening sees  
Waiting at droop of dusk upon the hills,—  
As darkness fell upon the hills, I met  
The challenge of the Gipsy-woman's gaze.

## Deeming Dale

WHO is it knocks at my window? Ho,  
Who is it rides the gale?

"Yonder the Pitiless Ladies go  
Adown the Deeming Dale:

"The cold of a cloud is over them,  
Open the pane and see;  
All the women of perilous dream  
Go drifting drearily,

"One by one on the bitter wind  
Companionless and grey,  
With the empty sound of a host behind  
To bring them on their way.

"But yonder, yonder comes the Moon,  
And yonder see them turn:  
Jewelled and fierce their hunting shoon  
Fly flashing through the fern."

Now whither do they ride so fast  
Upon the whirling wind?

"Fasten the pane against the blast!  
Hasten and draw the blind."

Who is it knocks at my window? Ho,  
Who is it rides the gale?

"And who would join the hosts that go  
Adown the Deeming Dale?"

## An Old Woman

UPON my hills, upon my heart  
 The purple evening shadows lie,  
 My thoughts leap like the olive sprays  
 That shimmer up against the sky.

About me blows the floweriness  
 Of summer and the young green corn ;  
 And in my heart dances a sheen  
 Of dark and silver, night and morn.

O, like an olive, old am I,  
 Fantastic, thwarted, whimsical ;  
 But then my thoughts are olive sprays,  
 Lissom, and mystical, and tall.

Gnarly and grey and old I am,  
 As Mother Earth, Great-mother Night ;  
 And up against the blue I dance,  
 Lilac and silver in the light.

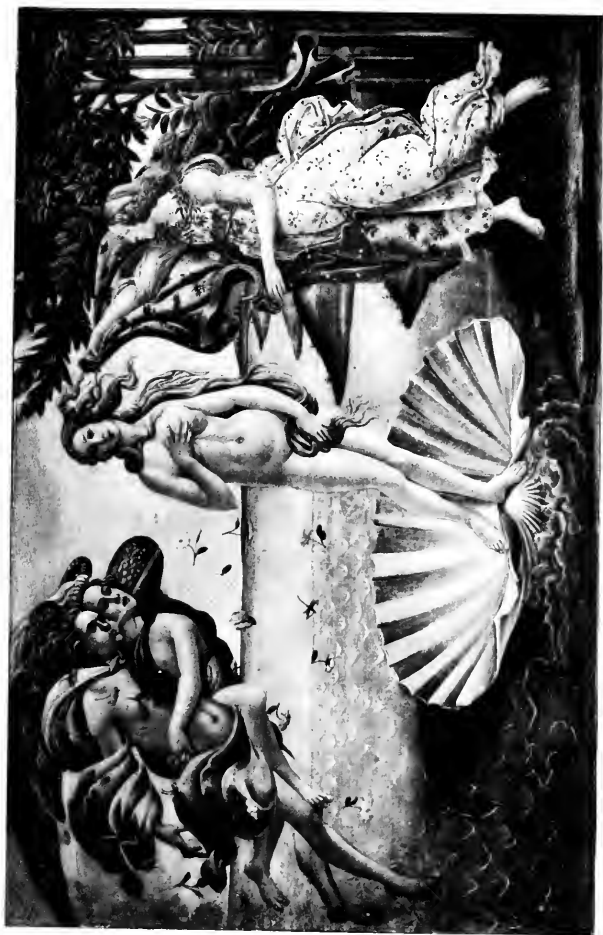
## The Coppice Wood

WHO is it haunts the coppice wood—  
Draws the thicket like a hood  
Primrose-broidered round her face—  
Sudden through the hazel boughs  
Glances her bewildering grace?  
Who is it haunts the coppice wood?

Who is it haunts the coppice wood?  
Wonder wakens in my blood;  
For her sake the song is fain  
That among the hazel boughs  
All the birds begin again.  
Who is it coming through the wood?

I saw the Maiden where she stood  
Ankle deep amid the flood  
Of the cuckoo blossom; all  
About her, through the hazel boughs,  
Rang the call and counter-call—  
“Who is it coming through the wood?”  
“May Morning in the coppice wood!”





The Wanderer : Being Words for  
Botticelli's Voyage of Venus

*An Earth Spirit, watching :*

WHAT car is this ye blow ?  
And what is this white Blossom of the cool grey  
Sea  
That worshipping ye hasten Her, and throw  
Flowers after Her in glee ?  
And wherefore is She inwardly so bright  
That, all and every whit,  
Her body with delight  
Illumined is, and like a pearl is it ?

And tell me, tell me, wherefore are Her eyes  
Purposeful, infinite,  
Transcending any thought,  
As though unto the Sea the streams had brought,  
From the mountains where they rise,  
High ultimate passion  
Of tempest and of stress,  
Out of its wonder, in the deeps, to fashion  
This loveliness ?

*The West Wind :*

Blessèd, blessèd, are we,  
Children of the South and of the West,

Whose blithe young windy faces  
Follow Her through the morning spaces  
Of the quiet Sea !  
Of all things She is loveliest :  
And we, we blow  
Her bark where She would go !

*The South Wind :*

Softly we blow !  
She is most pale and rare—  
Venus, the daughter of the Sea—  
And we have roses, and strow  
Them, that there be  
A richness in the air :  
Laughing, we blow  
The long, long tresses of Her languorous hair !

To Her body pale  
She doth catch them with Her hand  
As we blow them :  
With the dawn-gleam in and thro' them  
They become Her golden sail  
And bear Her to the land !

*West Wind :*

Wistful, She enters the ripples and the foam  
That keep the shore :  
Ocean is Her home—  
As a stranger  
Stands She at your door.



Wistful, She comes, as one that bringeth danger,  
Once the sea is left behind,  
To whosoe'er shall meet Her :  
She seeks if She may go unseen :  
And see, breasting our merry wind,  
Come ye to greet Her,  
And bring a flowered robe meet for our Queen !

*Earth Spirit, offering the Robe :*

How it is vain !  
Those feet, where'er they pass,  
To sweet rebellious pain  
Must wake the ungovernable grass .  
Out of this very robe the air shall learn  
Proud and implacable insurgencies  
To whisper to the unforgetting trees !  
And wheresoe'er She glances,  
Stern, without ruth,  
On errands far, and never to return,  
Her eyes will bid the adventurous heart of youth !

*Sung in the Grove :*

Needs must we pause amid our maiden dances :  
Across their calm control  
Wakes the new gladness  
That begins to stir  
Confusedly within our Soul :  
Some passion of Immortal Madness  
Shaking its sleep away to welcome Her !  
Ah, we delay,  
Attendant on the pleasure

Of this tall Stranger, that ye blow  
Hither across the Sea :  
Amid our play,  
Her ocean-stepping feet bring in a measure  
Of world-perplexity :

Yea, yea !  
For She whose bark ye bring,  
Cometh to carry away,  
Upon some wayward rhythm of wandering,  
Our ancient treasure,  
The old sweet steps we know,  
That flow together, and flow  
In the stately dances of virginity.

*Earth Spirit :*

Ah, whither, whither, whither,  
White Bird that wendest hither,  
White Dove across the Sea ?

*Venus answers nothing, always looking wistfully before  
Her.*

*Earth Spirit, aside :*

As in a dream,  
Moving She doth not move :  
The ages stream  
By Her—She stems their tide  
Poised on a shell—doth prove  
Their murmuring flow, and silent doth abide.

## *South Wind :*

Maiden,  
Ask Her not whither !  
About Her feet  
Invisibly,  
Her little bark is laden  
With mystery,  
With all that is not born  
And is to be.

## *West Wind :*

From far beyond the Past,  
By paths untried,  
With empty hands, as one forlorn,  
Mere jetsam of the wanton tide,  
Naked, and carried on a shell, at last  
She is come hither,—She,  
Immortal Wanderer through Time, Child of Eternity !

## *Sung in the Grove :*

Are Thy feet wandering feet ?  
Are Thy hands vain ?  
Heavy Thy flight—  
Burdened with bitter-sweet  
Of night and day,  
Promise obscure of pain  
And ever-incomplete  
Delight ?  
Snatchest Thou hence for aye  
Peace from our silences,  
Shadowy blossoming ?

Plantest Thou fierce and bright  
Wonders instead of peace?—  
Thou comest, and—  
Whatso Thou bring,  
Whatso Thou take away,—  
We reck not anything  
So Thou but stay !

*West Wind :*

Fair  
Though ye greet Her, yet in vain your prayer !  
Her feet that are the New Life's Messengers  
Know not delaying.  
Whenas our singing stirs  
About Her head,  
Through the long strands of Her hair,  
Those idle fingers, playing,  
In every golden thread  
Catch a sure murmuring  
Of voices far away,  
Bidding Her feet depart !

*South Wind :*

Together, when we snatch Her robe, and blow  
Her body clean of care,  
Fragrance of orchard blossoming  
Fulfil Her, She is all  
Odour and murmur and desire of Spring.  
  
Then wandering grows fair,  
With eagerness, Her heart  
Making reply,

She hears the unvisited,  
The untrodden islands call,  
And She forgets to stay.

Voyager, She, Her errand still achieving ;  
She lingers whiles She may,  
With mystic fingers and that golden thread  
The enkindling wonder weaving,  
Her fabric of far vision, floating, to lie outspread  
Luminous, over all the earth and sky.

### *West Wind :*

Sure as ye think to hold Her, so  
Certain your undecieving !  
Some dawn or evening from the hills  
Down to Her scallop, unobserved She'll go :  
Our breezes begin stirring, and below  
Her feet the ripple trills :  
Ye call : She doth not answer : She is sped.

### *The Winds, together :*

Laughing, we blow  
Her bark where it would go !

## November

**F**AR inland, and a sky  
Like a sea-rippled strand,  
With cold pale pools left by the far-spent tide—  
A limpid east-wind blowing.

Marching against the sky, horses and men,  
A team goes, sowing in the corn  
Into the gleaming many-furrowed field,  
The harrows dragging after.

And the Earth gladdens quietly in the clean cold light  
As one that bathes at a salt pool on the strand  
And hears the sea afar—the old, wild sea—  
The haunting of the sea along the margin.

## The Sea-Change

**I**F when I yield my spirit to the Sea,  
When the still silent tide of Death receives me,  
I shall depart out of this life of forms  
Whose *Here* is but a point, whose *Now* is but a moment,  
Whose *Me* is but a sense-constricted soul,—  
If I depart, giving myself up wholly  
To the receiving waters infinite,  
Surely my spirit shall therein discover  
New and unmeasured being.

I will take such a body as the Light has,  
Or Music—ay, or other finer Force  
That runs unhindered through the fields of Space—  
I will exchange this *Here*, this *Now*, this *Me*,  
For other, vaster ; that I may pass out  
By open doors into the open air,  
And be at large with God.

Even now, whenso I love,  
Whenso my narrowed *Me* eludes its bonds  
And, reaching out and over, loosens, loses  
Itself to Life—even now, whenso I love,  
Surely there leaps beneath my heart the Immortal  
That shall go out into the Deeps with God.

## The Mirrors

THOU lookest in this mirror that displays  
A face, a form that answers thee and says  
"Behold thyself," and thou believest it :  
But when some other comes to thee and cries  
"Behold thyself ! " thou thinkest thyself wise  
Denying, O thou man of little wit !

Art thou this thing of mouth and nose and eyes  
This vested presence that upon thee cries  
With too familiar greeting from the glass ?  
I thought thee something nobler, for I heard  
The woodland call thee with its leafy word  
The field with its innumerable grass.

This bald five feet or more, is't all thou art ?  
Or is it haply but a little part,  
Whereof thou know'st not the mysterious Whole :  
Whereof there is no thing but whispers thee  
"Behold thyself " : whereof the stars and sea,  
Future and Past are mirrors to thy Soul ?



## Wind in the Door

**S**HRIEKS the wild wind i' the bolted door—  
That treacherous wind !  
But listen, unconfined,  
He is all mirth across the open moor.

Haunted, confused with pent-up sound,  
This barren shell ;  
But plain each syllable  
Of all the shouting waves beyond its bound.

And so shrieks Fate i' the soul confined—  
Ah, treacherous Fate !  
The heart emancipate  
Hears her all laughter like the moorland wind.

And so, confused as in a shell  
The pent-up sound,  
Goes thought, till all around  
He feels the Ocean, and breaks through the spell.

## Doubt

**M**Y mind is full of twisted ways,  
Of passages that wind about,  
And, turning, hide them from the blaze  
Of light that fills the world without.

In these recesses of my brain,  
Beyond the range of sun or star,  
Harbour darkness, doubt and pain :  
Light cannot reach them where they are,

Unless, long-beating like a flood,  
It burst the barriers of my will,  
Enter the channels of my blood,  
And with its life my life fulfil.

Then, then before it Doubt would die  
Out of its crannies, and be done ;  
Thought would forget uncertainty,  
And find the glory of the sun.

## Advent

I WAITED : he is come. Oh, I have dreamed  
Of him and doubted ; now I understand,—  
In all the day it was his glory gleamed,  
In all the darkness I have touched his hand.

'Tis the new life beginning ; now I see  
This cell is grown too small to hold me : I  
Am driven out by joy's necessity,  
For if I were to linger, joy must die.

So I must out and on. Fling the door wide,  
Good Porter, whether thou be life or death !  
These narrow walls are not for me ; outside  
The whole world breathes the wonder of his breath.

## At Nightfall

NOW let the thoughts of Time go by—  
Needs of the body and the mind ;—  
The busy sun is lost behind  
The hills, and all the meadows lie  
Under the eternal sky.

Now banish fancy, thought and care—  
Into their woods bid them begone ;  
Their busy day is out and done :  
For silence now must thou prepare  
Breathing the immortal air.

Thy cares go, giving thee release  
Into the silence of the night,  
While star and star across the height  
Measure the spaces of thy peace  
When thy cares go by and cease.

But when thy heart is free from stain,  
Washed as in waters infinite  
From every care that clouded it,  
With the morning thou wilt fain  
Take the thoughts of time again.

## For Two Pictures by Mary MacRae White

*I. The Clearing.*

CLEAR me a little space among the trees,  
April will brim it up with primroses.  
Nay, as with ruthless axe you pluck adown  
This coppice, silver-grey and purple-brown,  
Ere yet the January sun hath found  
Time to evoke a new leaf from the ground,  
Even already then, your clearing fills  
With blossom delicate as the blue hills  
And sweet as the wild wisdom that distils  
Among the old leaves sodden in the mire,—  
—The wayward smoke of the woodcutter's fire.

*II. The Gipsy's Looking-Glass.*

For you, it is a pool among the trees  
That you could scoop (almost) between your hands,  
A little black pool, bordered with green grass :  
But some who look upon it as they pass,  
And how it opens inward and expands  
Wizardly,—cross themselves : for unto these  
It hath a magic mightier than the sea's,  
Old witchcrafts manier than the moonlit sands,  
And it is called " The Gipsy's Looking-Glass."

Lucifer Triumphant : Suggested by  
William Blake's Picture

UPON the dust her loveliness is spread—  
Eve's yellow hair : her foolish fingers rest  
Upon the fruit forbid her : on her breast,  
Crushing its petals, lolls the cunning head,  
And, loop on scaly loop, obscene and dread  
Locking her, gloating over her, possessed  
Of her, the whole black serpent. With what zest  
He feels the flame lap-lapping, hot and red !

She faints : while, stretched above her and the snake,  
Potent to save, and slay that shameful thing,  
Saving her not, but (for the hidden sake  
Of some wild hope that is not yet awake)  
Enduring with her, waits on weariless wing  
Lucifer, Son of the Morning, triumphing !

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